

# Conflict and Conflict Management: Lesotho's Political Crisis After the 1998 Election

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*Conflicts form an integral part of social change in all societies. Various theoretical insights into conflicts corroborate the above assertion. These include Social Darwinism, Modernisation Paradigm and Marxism. It goes without saying therefore that conflicts, in and of themselves, are not necessarily negative phenomena. Conflicts become counterproductive and negative once they turn violent and belligerents attempt to resolve them by military means. This paper argues that conflicts have always been part of Lesotho's political history and have undermined the country's democratic governance especially as they usually turned violent and protagonists attempt to resolve them by military means with or without external backing. The paper illustrates this stark reality by focusing on the conflict following the 1998 election in Lesotho.*

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## Introduction

Lesotho's entire political history is marked by incessant and protracted conflicts. These conflicts, which are both overt and covert, have been punctuated by outright violence of one form or another at different points of the country's turbulent history. At the heart of Lesotho's multi-faceted conflicts, lies the country's ostensibly insurmountable structural crisis and institutional paralysis that have, in particular, beset its post-colonial history. Within this structural crisis and institutional paralysis also lies the intense, and at times acrimonious, power struggle among the political elite, which most invariably is considered tantamount to a struggle for survival given the critical role played by the state sector in the overall economic development process. In a word, the

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political elite perceive of state power as the crucial instrument for economic accumulation and the contestation for this power turns into a zero-sum game and most often than not becomes an end in itself and in the process national development suffers.

Various theoretical frameworks have been applied to understand the root causes of conflicts especially in developing societies. Social Darwinism, which is a conceptual framework that is traceable to the classical works of Charles Darwin, traces the roots of conflicts to human nature. It propounds that the social character humankind is premised on constant fear and the urge for survival in its hostile environment. Societies, therefore, will always be engulfed in perpetual conflicts. Classical Marxism also sees conflicts as natural and inevitable, once a society experiences class cleavages, emergence of private property and state formation. Contrary to Darwinism, Marxism sees conflicts as necessarily systemic phenomena, and not so much inherent in humankind. The modernisation school also sees conflicts as premised on self-interest of actors in competition over scarce resources à la Adam Smith. Another strand of modernisation theory views conflicts as directly linked to the inevitable contradiction of high political mobilisation and defective and enfeebled institutions in developing countries.

This paper provides a sketchy survey of the Lesotho conflict following the 1998 election. It focuses on four main aspects of the conflict: (a) the root causes of the conflict; (b) the nature of the conflict; (c) conflict management strategies; and (d) the political settlement and prospects for stability. The discussion in the paper also attempts to blend and weave together the analysis of the conflict patterns and dynamics in Lesotho with a commentary on prospects for stability and democratic governance.

### **A Conceptual Frame of Analysis**

Although conflicts are inherent in all societies, the concept 'conflict' remains both nebulous and elusive in social science discourse (see Schellenberg, 1982). Some scholars trace conflicts to human behaviour and competition over scarce resources, while others link it to incompatible interests, choices and goals

between two or more parties (Deng and Zartman, 1991; Ohlson and Stedman, 1994). Despite varying interpretations of conflicts, the thread that weaves various analyses of conflict together is that all conflict situations have, as their *raison d'être*, competition/survival strategy, resources/power, interests/values. So, essentially, these three elements constitute the critical triangle of all conflicts in all societies. Conflicts arise, in a social setting, when two or more parties contest distribution of resources/power and interests/values for survival in an environment where all parties are unable to share these resources and values in a mutually equitable and interdependent fashion. Conflicts occur at various levels of society: the micro-level (ie family/household); the meso-level (organisations such as industrial firms) and the macro-level (national level). Besides intra-state conflicts, there are also inter-state conflicts. During the Cold War and apartheid era, Southern Africa experienced more inter-state conflicts that were either directly or indirectly linked to South Africa's regional strategy of destabilisation (Martin and Johnson, 1986; Sejanamane, 1994). Currently a majority of conflicts in the region are intra-state conflicts linked to the crisis of the state and resource distribution (see Benjamin and Gregory, 1992; Ohlson and Stedman, 1994).

It is behind this background that the concept 'conflict' is used in this paper to denote the incompatibility of interests, choices, goals and ideas over the distribution of power and scarce resources among many actors (Matlosa, 1998a). Conflicts arise from interaction among parties who have "incompatible ends [or aims and objectives] in which the ability of one actor to gain his/her ends depends to an important degree on the choices or decisions another actor will take" (cited in Musambachime, 1998:61). Following on Peter Wallensteen's conceptualisation (1988), Ohlson and Stedman define conflict as a social situation in which "at least two parties try to acquire the same set of scarce material or immaterial resources at the same time" (1994:13).

It is, therefore, axiomatic that it is in the nature of society and social engineering that conflicts occur and recur over time. Put somewhat differently, the fact that societies are beset by conflicts should not necessarily be cause for alarm or fatalistic despair. A conflict, in and of itself, is not an undesirable or destructive phenomenon in social change. Conflict may, in fact, be very

necessary to move societies forward and transform social relations in a positive direction for a durable and sustainable peace, reconciliation and political stability. However, once a conflict situation assumes violent proportions, it becomes both undesirable and counter-productive (see Gutteridge and Spence, 1997). More so if such a conflict keeps escalating causing massive destruction to both human life and property. The on-going conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a clear case in point.

Social Darwinism perceives of conflict as inherent in human nature. The biological, physical and social character of mankind is seen as predicated on fear and the constant urge for survival in a naturally hostile environment (Schellingberg, 1982). Charles Darwin likened human life to experiences in the animal kingdom where the rule of thumb is survival of the fittest in a manner that social life is founded on and sustained by rivalry. Following closely on the footsteps of social Darwinism, the renowned French sociologist, Emile Durkheim, reckoned that the transition from the traditional (*Gemeinschaft*) to the modern society (*Gesellschaft*) led to the "dissolution of the old ties of mechanical solidarity which bound people together in the close-knit communities of pre-industrial society. The interpersonal bonds had depended on spatial contiguity and personal acquaintance, and had broken down with the changes attendant on the emergence of modern society, particularly urbanisation. These changes had led to a progressive depersonalisation of society...." (Roxborough, 1979:3). The depersonalisation of society and the concomitant process of individualism, in turn, lead to social alienation (*the anomie factor*), itself a contributory factor to social conflicts of various forms and magnitudes.

In strict classical Marxist parlance, the history of all class-divided societies is the history of protracted class struggles. Marx and Engels are more forthright and unambiguous on this assertion which is so central to the Marxist conception of human history: "the modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones" (1968:36). For Marxists, therefore, conflicts are not only inevitable, but are also necessary if society is to advance and remain

dynamic. The social structure is crucial in understanding human behaviour; thus conflicts are explained, from a Marxist perspective, in terms of the manner of interaction between the base and superstructure. In other words, conflicts always have to do with either class struggle or systemic failure or both at any given level of social interaction at any time in the history of social development (Schellenberg, 1982).

For modernisation theorists of the likes of Adam Smith, social conflict is predicated upon self-interest of various actors and forces within the marketplace. So conflict, in Smithian terms, is both endemic and central to social advancement. At the heart of conflicts are "parties pursuing interests which are not fully harmonious. Adam Smith was among those who saw interest conflicts as perfectly normal. It is natural that each individual has his own interests and that these may often be in some degree of conflict with the interests of others" (Schellingberg, 1982:51). Another strand of modernisation perspective of conflict or instability in developing countries was the one developed by the American political scientist, Samuel Huntington (1968). For him, much of the conflicts or what he termed political decay in these countries is caused mainly by a profound contradiction between high political mobilisation and low level of institutionalisation. The argument here is that once the populace is highly mobilised, it places increased demands on the political system. If the political system is characterised by defective and enfeebled institutions, it is unable to deliver to satisfy demands of a mobilised populace. Where institutions in a political system have "little power, less majesty, and no resiliency..., governments simply do not govern" (Huntington, 1968:2). This then results in deep-seated political conflicts and instability, which most invariably paralyses governance and the state system in a majority of developing states. Political instability/decay in most developing countries, argues Huntington, is "in large part the product of rapid social change and rapid mobilisation of new groups into politics coupled with the slow development of political institutions" (1968:4). For Darwin and Smith, the unit of analysis for social conflicts is the individual (human nature and rational choice), while for Huntington and the Marxists it is the institutions and social system (institutional functionalism and structural determinism). Here we have an epistemological conflict in the conceptualisation of social conflicts: is it a combination of

systems and institutions or is it the behaviour of individual members of society that help us better fathom the roots, nature and magnitude of societal conflicts?

This article grapples with these complex issues focusing on the conflict in Lesotho at the macro-level of the state and micro-level of individual actors. We assess the root causes of the conflict, probing into its dynamics over time, interrogating its critical determinants, highlighting the key players and examining the core issues at the heart of the conflict. The mechanisms used for resolving or at least managing the conflict are also put under spotlight. While a conflict, per se, is not a necessarily counterproductive development, two most important features easily turn it into a social liability: (a) once it turns irreversibly violent; and (b) once it cannot be resolved by peaceful means, viz. negotiation. Violence is an antithesis of political settlement of social conflicts and usually tends to lead to escalation rather than de-escalation of conflicts. Peaceful means of settlement of conflicts is a process that involves one or a combination of the following:

- Transforming the system of actors, issues and actions away from focus on incompatibilities to compatibilities (principled compromise);
- Reducing level of destructive *behaviour of violence to non-violent* levels even if basic incompatibilities still exist (conflict de-escalation and containment of violence);
- Solving the basic incompatibilities as perceived by the protagonists, so that a mutually satisfactory, sustainable and durable political settlement is reached (eradication of incompatibilities); and
- Transforming the entire conflict mapping and changing the relationship between the protagonists from one of conflict to that of peace (conflict transformation and peace-building) (Ohlson and Stedman, 1994:13-14).

Lesotho experienced the most profound conflict in its entire history in the immediate aftermath of the 1998 general election. The key protagonists in the conflict were the ruling party and some of the opposition parties, ostensibly contesting the outcome of the election, yet the subterranean field of the conflict transcended the election outcome. Although the opposition parties and the

ruling party played a primary role in the conflict, the monarchy and security establishment played a secondary role. The role of the monarchy in the recent conflict is relatively difficult to untangle compared to that of the security establishment. This is so for a variety of reasons, the primary one being that King Letsie III had to exercise a lot of restraint during the conflict lest he was deemed poised to repeat the 1994 'coup' which invited external intervention led by South Africa (Matlosa, 1994). Other commentators argue that the camping of the opposition parties outside the Palace gates amounted to tacit support of the monarch to their cause. The failure of the security establishment to contain the conflict within the parameters of law and order was generally interpreted as complicity, thus turning it into a party to the conflict.

Equally important to the configuration of power among the protagonists in the conflict was the involvement of external forces, notably South Africa and Botswana, purportedly under the umbrella of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). With the failure of initial attempts to manage the conflict by peaceful means and preventive diplomacy, it escalated into open violence, leading to loss of lives and destruction of property. With the security machinery unable or unprepared to re-establish law and order, the political situation rapidly deteriorated and government was paralysed. When the opposition supporters hijacked the state-run Radio Lesotho and a mutiny occurred in the Lesotho Defence force (LDF), the Prime Minister quickly requested external military assistance. A positive response came from South Africa and Botswana in September 1998 when their troops arrived in Lesotho purportedly to come and restore political stability. The negotiations among the protagonists, under the mediation of South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, culminated in an agreement on the following, among others:

- 1) the holding of a fresh election in the year 2000;
- 2) the establishment of the Interim Political Authority (IPA) charged with the mandate to oversee, in liaison with the government, preparations for the election; and
- 3) the restructuring of the Independent Electoral Commission.

This paper investigates the broader dynamics and ramifications of this conflict.

It does not, however, attempt to provide an exhaustive treatise of all the elements of the conflict for that would require a complete book publication in its own right. The discussion is confined mainly to (a) the root causes of the conflict; (b) the nature of the conflict; (c) conflict management strategies; and (d) prospects and challenges for stability and democratic governance. The key assumptions of the paper are as follows:

- The conflict expressed the country's historic structural and institutional crisis;
- Two conflict management strategies were used, namely negotiation and military force, with the latter gaining upper-hand, and thus being crucial in both creating a climate for the political settlement and its sustenance;
- The current political settlement is a positive development, which, if well managed, could deliver stability in Lesotho and thus contributing positively to democratic governance. Conversely, if the settlement is not managed well, a real risk still exists for reverting back into another deep-seated conflict with a great potential for state collapse a la Zartman (1995).

### **The Root Causes of the Conflict**

Most commentators and observers of the Lesotho political scene have attempted to explain the current conflict by reference to the 1998 election. This explanation is plausible only to a limited extent for it fails to identify causal factors besides and beyond the election. The 1998 election was only one, probably the most obvious, dimension of this multi-faceted political crisis. A critical assessment of the current conflict suggests that it has deep historical roots in Lesotho's institutional crisis and constitutional disorder since independence (Weisfelder, 1967; Makoa, 1994; Matlosa, 1997a). A sketchy outline of this dimension of the conflict is in order. First, during the period 1965-70, Lesotho experienced what could be termed an embryonic democracy. Foundations of post-independence political development were laid by the 1965 election. The radical Basutoland Congress Party (BCP), most popular and well-organised of all the contestants, had been predicted the winner of this election



by most observers. The royalist amalgam styled Marema-Tlou Freedom Party (MFP), which had just suffered a split some couple of years prior to the election, was not considered a critical force. By some twist of irony, however, the outcome of the election was a surprise victory of the conservative Basotuland National Party (BNP) as illustrated in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: 1965 General election for the National Assembly**

| Contestants  | No. of votes   | % of votes | No. of seats |
|--------------|----------------|------------|--------------|
| BNP          | 108 162        | 41.6       | 31           |
| BCP          | 103 050        | 39.7       | 25           |
| MFP          | 42 837         | 16.5       | 4            |
| MTP          | 5 697          | 2.2        | 0            |
| Indepts      | 79             | 0.03       | 0            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>259 825</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>60</b>    |

**Source:** Matlosa, 1997b: 142.

Although the enraged BCP accepted the election outcome, there was a lingering suspicion that the process was not free and fair. The BCP could not bring itself to believe that they had won the 1960 local government election with a landslide victory, only to perform badly in the general election just some five years down the line (Matlosa, 1997b). The BNP victory was, however, to all intents and purposes, a narrow one which had ensured their assumption of state power mainly due to the first-past-the-post electoral system bequeathed from the British colonial administration. Although the BNP got 42% of the votes against the BCP's 40%, the latter had no role in government for the electoral system ensured a one-party rule. Lesotho attained political independence the following year under the BNP rule. The country experienced some relative stability during this period. The political and constitutional foundations of Lesotho's embryonic democracy were not firmly rooted. Second, the period 1970-86, which we refer to as the era of de facto one-party dictatorship, was the most turbulent part of Lesotho's political history. It began with the seizure of

power by the BNP after the farcical 1970 election, which was clearly won by the BCP, but the ruling party refused to abide by the rules of the game and thus subverted the verdict of the electorate. The BCP had undoubtedly prepared itself very well for this contest, aiming to upset its arch-rival – the BNP- and reverse the 1965 political outcome. It capitalised on policy failures of the BNP with its urban-biased development strategy and the marginalisation of certain regions, which were perceived as stronghold of the opposition, eg the mountain areas. It is no wonder, therefore, that despite the BNP's reliance on state resources and massive support from apartheid South Africa, Britain and West Germany, the BCP won the election with a comfortable margin as shown in Table Two below.

**Table 2: 1970 General election for the National Assembly**

| Contestants  | No. of votes   | % of votes | No. of seats |
|--------------|----------------|------------|--------------|
| BNP          | 152 907        | 49.8       | 36           |
| BCP          | 108 162        | 42.2       | 23           |
| MFP          | 22 279         | 7.3        | 1            |
| Other        | 1 909          | 0.7        | 0            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>285 257</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>60</b>    |

**Source:** Southall and Petlane, 1995:42.

The BNP annulled the electoral process as the returns from the polling stations confirmed the BCP victory. This party continued its rule, having denied a legitimate winner an opportunity to govern on the basis of a mandate acquired through a popular vote. Since then, Lesotho politics was marked by patronage, repression and accommodation as the ruling party aimed to ensure the perpetual reproduction over time of a de facto one-party state under its unchallenged command. Reliance on repression also meant that the ruling party would anchor statecraft upon the security machinery and for this reason, the security establishment was not only beefed up, but highly politicised (Southall and Petlane, 1995; Mothibe, 1997; Matlosa, 1998). After an abortive election of

1985, this era of one-party dictatorship ended with a military coup that displaced the BNP government in 1986 after a long period of sour relations between the ruling party and the military itself. The apartheid government in South Africa took advantage of this wedge between the executive organ and the security establishment in Lesotho in its destabilisation of the country and helped precipitate the military coup (Edgar, 1987; Ajulu, 1986; Hassan, 1986; Matlosa, 1998b). Third, the period 1986-93, which can be termed the era of military authoritarianism, saw the deeper entrenchment of the military in Lesotho's political landscape. Two most important developments during this era were (a) the deepening indiscipline within the army, a trend that is common to all military governments throughout Africa (see Hutchful and Bathily, 1998), and (b) the entrenched interest of the military in active politics and state power. Over and above, the Lesotho politics was overtly militarised. Although the military withdrew from state power in the early 1990s, their interest in politics and how the state is managed remained strong. The 1993 election which acted as a mid-wife to the withdrawal of the military from state power, was won overwhelmingly by the BCP, but the BNP challenged the election outcome crying foul (Sekatle, 1995). The outcome of this election is shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: 1993 General election of the National Assembly**

| Contestants  | No. of votes   | % of votes | No. of seats |
|--------------|----------------|------------|--------------|
| BNP          | 398 355        | 74.7       | 65           |
| BCP          | 120 686        | 22.6       | 0            |
| MFP          | 7 650          | 1.4        | 0            |
| Other        | 6 287          | 1.2        | 0            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>532 978</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>65</b>    |

**Source:** Southall and Petlane, 1995:42.

It was to be expected, therefore, that, a civilian government that assumed power after the military withdrawal would find it difficult to institutionalise civil

control over the forces and be able to effectively demilitarise the political sphere. But the speed with which civil-military relations deteriorated and abruptly collapsed into open and violent conflicts shocked even the keen observers of Lesotho's political scene. Mutual suspicions marked the sour relations between the two and occasionally these erupted into protracted and violent conflicts that have invited external intervention mainly by the Southern African states with South Africa playing a lead role (Southall and Petlane, 1995; Matlosa, 1994; Makoa, 1998).

Surely, a government without a meaningful control and authority over the security establishment is bound ultimately to become a lame duck or a paper tiger, so to speak. Lack of civil control over the security establishment leads to two power blocs (i.e. the security organ and the executive organ of the state) that constantly contest state power through either covert or overt means. This has indeed been the key dilemma that has brutally confronted Lesotho since the 1993 election. Given the monopoly of violence enjoyed by the security establishment, most invariably, the power equation tilts in favour of the military and the government effectively becomes a lame Leviathan, in strict Hobbesian terms. Fourth and finally, the period 1993-98 can be characterised as the era of fragile democracy, which was marked by intense political instability in between the elections of 1993 and 1998. Despite the 1993 election which was hailed as the first ever democratic election since the country's independence, the country still experienced one-party rule with a fairly insignificant role for the opposition in the process of governance. This, of course, had a lot to do with the nature of the electoral system, much as it had something to do with the low level of institutionalisation of the political system itself as well as the entrenched class interests of the ruling party. It was no consternation, therefore, that in no time, the new government locked horns in protracted and internecine conflicts with other key organs of the state such as the security establishment, the bureaucracy and the monarchy/chieftainship. This situation helped considerably to paralyse the system of governance. But it was further worsened by the internal power struggles within the ruling party that resulted in the split of the party into two factions and ultimately the emergence of a splinter group, the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) (see Pule, 1997; Matlosa, 1997a; Sekatle, 1997; Weisfelder, 1997). The 1998 election took place under a very volatile political

environment marked in the main by mutual suspicion, mistrust and intrigue among key political actors. Its outcome, which is illustrated in Table 4 below, was both interesting and perplexing for a new party grabbed almost all seats in the National Assembly.

**Table 4: 1998 General election for the National Assembly**

| Contestants  | No. of votes   | % of votes | No. of seats |
|--------------|----------------|------------|--------------|
| LCD          | 355 049        | 60.7       | 79           |
| BNP          | 143 073        | 24.5       | 1            |
| BCP          | 61 793         | 10.6       | 0            |
| MFP          | 7 460          | 1.3        | 0            |
| Other        | 16 244         | 2.9        | 0            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>584 740</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>80</b>    |

**Source:** Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), Provisional Results, May 27, 1998.

By the time of the 1998 election, therefore, the writing on the wall was clear: a political confrontation among the political elite was imminent. But nobody predicted that it would take the form it did and assume the magnitude that it did. Political tensions rose sharply and a couple of months after the election, an unprecedented conflict was already simmering.

However, political instability in Lesotho is not only a manifestation of institutional decay and constitutional disorder, it is also a mirror-image of an age-old structural crisis marked by (a) a resource-poor labour reserve economy; (b) a predominantly state-based accumulation trajectory; (c) landlockedness and (d) external dependence which impinge on its sovereignty and security. Under conditions of a weak resource endowment and poverty, everybody looks up to the state to provide the basic necessities of survival. When the state is, as is often the case, unable to deliver, its legitimacy and credibility hang in balance. Further more, given the weak domestic private sector, the state is

viewed as a critical vehicle for accumulation by the political elite, hence the struggle over state power does not only become fierce, but acrimonious too (Ake, 1979; Chabal, 1994; Ake, 1996). Politics is then seen not as a positive-sum game but a zero-sum game wherein winner takes all and attempts to vanquish the opponents either by fair or foul means. Over and above, landlockedness and extreme external dependence also add to the structural determinants of conflicts in Lesotho. The landlocked and impoverished Lesotho has always depended on such external sources of capital formation as foreign aid, migrant remittances, dividends accruing from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). We can now add to this list the Lesotho Highlands Water Project from which the country will derive royalties from water transfer to South Africa. The first three factors of capital accumulation are all on the decline since the demise of apartheid (UN, 1995) and further more foreign direct investment has been difficult to attract due mainly to political unrest in the country (Tangri, 1993). All these developments suggest that traditional sources of state revenue and employment creation are fast shrinking. As this happens, the struggle over scarce resources intensifies. The struggle over state power among the political elite intensifies further, for the elite perceives that power as a cheap licence for accumulation (Chabal, 1994; Ake, 1996), given the weak economic base of this social stratum.

The conflict itself revolved around three key issues: (a) legitimacy of the government; (b) political participation and (c) distribution of resources. The opposition parties challenged the legitimacy of the LCD government on the grounds of alleged electoral fraud. The agreement to hold a fresh election in the year 2000 is an attempt to resolve this legitimacy crisis. Given the constituency-based electoral system, Lesotho's most recent successive elections of 1993 and 1998 produced a *de facto* one-party rule, which generates discontent over political participation by the opposition. Part of the mandate of the IPA is to review the current electoral system and move the system towards a more inclusive electoral model. In politics, power is the most important resource. Its distribution is very crucial in all political systems. Over-centralisation of power quickly lends itself to authoritarian rule and political instability, while some form of decentralisation could easily contribute to the establishment of a pluralist democracy. The establishment of the IPA is, in part, meant to give the

opposition parties a stake in state power, at least in relation to the electoral process. In this manner, it provides a modicum of power-sharing between government and the opposition which contest the legitimacy of the government itself.

### **The Nature of the Conflict**

Although much of the issues in the current conflict are directly linked to the 1998 election, the roots of the conflict are traceable to the structural and institutional crisis discussed above. The issues of the conflict also help us better define the nature and character of the conflict itself. At the macro-level of analysis, the political impasse in Lesotho could be seen as part of the historical structural and institutional crisis. At the micro-level of analysis, it can be linked directly to the protracted internal faction-fighting within the then ruling BCP since the 1993 election (see Pule, 1997; Matlosa, 1997; Sekatle, 1997). A few months after the 1993 election, serious cracks began to show within the ranks of the ruling party. Increasingly internal feuding within the party intensified and two distinct factions emerged. The Maporesha (pressure group) comprised the enlightened young turks who were eager to institutionalise some administrative and leadership reforms in the party. The Majelathoko (those who eat alone) faction was composed of the conservative old guard that was bent on maintaining the status quo and the leadership style and personalities that have been the order of the day since 1952. This power struggle, which also hinged on succession given the advanced age of the then leader, culminated in a major split of the ruling party. Out of this split emerged the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) in June 1997, led by the late Ntsu Mokhehle, the then Prime Minister. The Prime Minister announced in parliament that the new party would form government and displace the one that won the 1993 election, which will in turn become the official opposition in the National Assembly. Justifying his surprise political volte face that complicated the political chess game for the opposition and also making a swipe at his opponents within the party, Mokhehle proclaimed that

I, and those who support me, have tried to restore normality in the affairs of the party, but it is now clear to us that these gentlemen, in fact, stand to benefit from this confusion: their strategy seems to be to drag the issue, so that, come

election time, they should be the ones in control, even if this against the wishes of the majority in the party (cited in Matlosa, 1997:243).

The two factions engaged in a fierce power struggle which was driven by neither policy nor ideological differences, but rather by leadership squabbles and how best to share the spoils of state power (Matlosa, 1997a; Weisfelder, 1997; Gay, 1998). As the LCD emerged, it commanded a majority support of 40 seats against the BCP's 23 seats in the National Assembly. It was in this ground that the BCP, a party that had been put into power through a popular vote, was relegated to an official opposition party in parliament. Enraged by the Prime Minister's unexpected political volte face, which they dubbed a coup d'état, the BCP refused to assume the role of official opposition in parliament, but instead appealed to the King and the SADC countries to reinstate the elected government. Subsequently, the BCP joined forces with the Basotho National Party (BNP) and the Maramatlou Freedom Party (MFP) in their condemnation of Ntsu Mokhehle's action that they interpreted as a parliamentary coup par excellence. This alliance called upon the King to dissolve the LCD government, form a government of national unity and postpone the election. At this stage, while the former called on the King to dissolve the LCD government and reinstate the BCP government, the latter two advocated a formation of a government of national unity and postponement of the 1998. The King did not dissolve the LCD government for the constitution would not allow him to do so. Besides, he would not subject himself and the institution of monarchy to another awkward political predicament as the one in 1994 when he temporarily displaced the BCP and had to reinstate it under extreme duress. The SADC countries also did not respond to the appeals by the opposition parties. They watched as the political crisis unfolded and ultimately erupted into a deep-seated conflict. The seeds of the current conflict in Lesotho are, therefore, linked to events prior to the 1998 election and to link them merely to the election, as Tsie (1998) does, is to miss the point. A plausible explanation of the Lesotho conflict is the one that sees it as both historical and structural and this is what Gay's (1998) refreshing analysis does, although it has one pitfall of reducing the conflict to a 'tug-of-war' between the traditionalists and commoners. This author's view is that the conflict was more broader than the royalist-commoner dichotomy in both form and content and had deeper roots that transcended the election and its outcome.



Despite assurances by legal and political experts that the LCD government was properly constituted given the Westminster parliamentary system and the national Constitution, the formation of the LCD and its rule resulted in a deep sense of bitterness among the political elite and thus contributed to the already profound polarisation of Lesotho's political society. The opposition parties had already started a series of activities aimed at either unseating or at least destabilising the LCD rule, which they deemed as illegitimate and unconstitutional. They only relaxed pressure as elections drew closer, thereby suspending protest action hoping to unseat the government through the ballot. As ballot failed to do the desired trick, the opposition alliance reverted back to their protest action, this time with more vigour.

This political turmoil almost paralysed Lesotho's legislature as the Lower House was divided into two warring factions which exchanged a litany of abusive language on the floor of the House to the extent that the police had to be invited to drag some members out of the House as the Speaker seemed to lose control. Besides, the Upper House (Senate) also got embroiled in this political impasse. The House was highly critical of the Prime Minister's move that it perceived as a subversion and travesty of democratic governance. It then passed a resolution that it would not consider any bills from the National Assembly. Furthermore, Senate also requested the King to dissolve parliament and force the Prime Minister to call a fresh election.

As the election date drew closer, the political bitterness among the contestants became more and more pronounced. The animosity and the rivalry were real as the opposition parties aimed to either dislodge or destabilise the LCD government through both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary means. Extra-parliamentary pressure was relaxed as the election approached with the assumption that the newly formed LCD would be defeated. However, to the chagrin of the opposition parties, the LCD won the election with an unexpected overwhelming majority as illustrated in table 4 above. Unexpected partly because the LCD was a new horse contesting the race for the first time with well-trodden horses with an established history in Lesotho's political landscape and partly because its emergence was assumed to have enraged not only the opposition parties, but the entire nation. The political bitterness and polarisation

in society notwithstanding, LCD won almost all the seats and left its opponents stranded. Once more, the first-past-the-post electoral system had delivered another one-party government in Lesotho.

Rather than deepen Lesotho's democracy, the election added to the country's multivariate conflicts among the political elite. It is worth noting that these conflicts were already in existence even prior to the election. What the election merely did was to hasten their momentum and deepen their magnitude. In a nutshell, the election, in and of itself, was not the cause for the conflict that nearly turned into a civil war in the country. As we have argued, the conflict is historical in form and structural in content and, thus, cannot be sufficiently explained by reference to any one single political episode, such as an election. The 1998 election had its specific contribution to the on-going conflict in Lesotho in that its outcome deepened the political bitterness which had been occasioned by the BCP split and the subsequent LCD rule. The outcome of the election, like all others since 1965, did not only generate more conflicts among the political elite, but exposed the absurdity of the first-past-the-post electoral system, which most invariably gives unfair advantage to a dominant party over all others. Initially, the opposition parties challenged the election outcome through the courts of law. When that strategy failed to live up to their expectation, they switched to protest marches and demonstrations. They further appealed to the King and some SADC countries especially Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe (guarantors of Lesotho's democracy since 1994) to dissolve the elected government and help establish a government of national unity – the same demand they had made prior to the election. Once more, their demand was not met. As the opposition parties pressed more for their demands, political tensions rose astronomically. The belligerent parties seemed poised to brace for outright confrontation. The opposition parties camped outside the Palace gates, purportedly awaiting a response from the King on their key demands. The ruling party condemned its opponents in the strongest terms possible. The parties to the conflict held steadfastly to their positions without any noticeable indication for compromise and a strive towards a win-win solution to the conflict. In the end, the conflict escalated and assumed violent proportions with considerable cost to human life and property.

## **Conflict Management**

Although internal efforts were made to bring the belligerent parties together to negotiate some political settlement, external actors played a greater role which drove the process to the current settlement. During the early stages of the conflict, a Lesotho Crisis Committee was formed comprising the Lesotho Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), the Lesotho Network for Conflict Management (LNCM), the Lesotho Council for Non-governmental Organisations (LCN), the Heads of Churches and the Lesotho Youth Federation (LYF). The crisis committee attempted to bring about a peaceful resolution of the conflict by creating a climate for direct talks between the belligerent parties. The Committee organised a crucial meeting whereby the opposition alliance and the government reached the following agreement:

to seek to normalise life especially in the capital city, Maseru; to remove vigilante groups from the streets and allow normal traffic flow;

- I. to allow humanitarian relief to go to those most affected by the conflict and provision of essential services such as access to hospitals, food shops, banks and funeral services;
- II. parties to commit themselves to an independent audit of the election results as suggested by the South African Deputy President, Thabo Mbeki.

However, mutual mistrust and suspicions that the parties harboured towards each other led to the collapse of these early efforts, including the above agreement. The spotlight quickly focused on external efforts still aimed at finding a solution to the conflict.

Central to external efforts to resolve Lesotho's political conflict was the role of South Africa, Lesotho's only immediate neighbour. On the 10th August 1998, a delegation from South Africa comprising Deputy President, Thabo Mbeki, Foreign Affairs Minister, Alfred Nzo, and Defence Minister, Joe Modise, jetted into Maseru with a view to help quell the turmoil. This delegation met representatives of both parties whereupon an agreement was reached that a

team of experts from the SADC region would be formed to investigate allegations of irregularities during the election. Consequently, a tripartite commission of inquiry involving representatives from South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe, headed by Pius Langa of the South African constitutional court, was established.

The work of the Commission proceeded at a painstakingly slow pace, resulting in delays in submission of the final report. As the report got delayed, political tempers kept rising in Lesotho, resulting in small-scale armed conflicts between the supporters of the belligerent parties leading to deaths and injuries. In the meantime, the opposition parties had begun a campaign of destabilising the government and rendering the country ungovernable. To this end, the opposition parties called on the public to refrain from coming to work on specific days. Their supporters would enforce these threats by mounting road blockades, terrorising street vendors, burning tyres, looting some shops. Further more, armed youth gangs from both sides of warring parties engaged in skirmishes in the capital, Maseru, which claimed lives and caused damage to property. Not only did the security establishment fail to bring the situation under control, but political loyalties turned them into partisan actors in a conflict that was slowly gravitating towards civil war. Even after a long delay, when the Langa Report ultimately came out on September 17, its contents only hardened the original positions of the conflicting parties for the allegations that the election was rigged were neither confirmed nor disproved. Consider, for instance, the following observation from the Report itself:

We are unable to state that the validity of the elections has been conclusively established. We point out, however, that some of the apparent irregularities and discrepancies are sufficiently serious concerns. We cannot, however, postulate that the result does not reflect the will of the Lesotho electorate. We merely point out that the means for checking this has been compromised and created much room for doubt (p.28).

As this passage indicates, the Langa Report was full of vague and inconclusive statements which essentially failed to give the electoral process a clean bill of health, but at the same time not making a definitive case for the opposition parties. In this way, the report provided a moral ammunition for both sides to claim some imaginary and pyrrhic victory: a right recipe for a precipitous

escalation of the conflict. Gay aptly observes that "the report was a disappointment. It appeared to give everyone something to cheer about, and basically blamed the Independent Electoral Commission for having made a mess of the election" (1998:3). The Langa Commission, thus, played an insignificant role as a conflict management tool for its outcome did not bring the parties together to some mutually acceptable political settlement. Given that Basotho had pinned all their hopes on the Langa report to at least help the belligerent parties to settle their differences, when the report failed to do that the conflict escalated. Attitudes were hardened further and parties to the conflict continue to drift apart, thus, making it well-nigh impossible to strive towards a negotiated settlement. The opposition parties mounted their offensive. The ruling party also braced itself for the tug-of-war. At this stage, it was clear that the parties were ready to take up a fight. Each was desperately looking forward to the security establishment and the monarchy to tilt the balance of forces in its favour so as to have an edge in the conflict and force its adversary into acquiescence. By their own words and deeds, the parties seemed to have jettisoned a negotiated settlement, at least on their own. Taking advantage of the reluctance (in some instances complicity) of the security establishment, the opposition parties confiscated many government vehicles, closed government offices and captured the State Radio station. Not only did the security establishment watch chaos and anarchy unfold and take a toll on human life and property, but tensions within the forces began to show. The police and the military exchanged fire around the Palace gates on August 17 resulting in one death and many injuries. Later, lower ranks in the army undertook a mutiny by forcing the commander to dismiss about 28 high-ranking army personnel and to tender his resignation over the Radio. The commander and those purportedly dismissed officers later sought refuge in South Africa. Although these developments had all the markings of some conspiracy to topple the government, they did not in their own way amount to a coup as yet. A coup d'état is a situation whereby a de jure government has been effectively displaced by unlawful means by a person or group of persons who in turn impose a de facto authority. A situation of this nature had not yet happened, even if some elements within the opposition camp could have planned it. What was not in doubt, though, was the fact that the activities of the opposition parties, combined with the complicity of the security establishment had

effectively paralysed the government and destabilised the entire management of national affairs. As the conflict escalated and the security situation deteriorated, the government of Lesotho requested military assistance from Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

### **Military Intervention and Negotiations**

When the Lesotho government appealed for external military assistance, it became abundantly clear that all initial attempts at preventive diplomacy, including the Langa Commission, had not delivered desired results. It was also clear that the external military intervention was meant to bolster a threatened state. It was therefore never meant to be an impartial instrument in the conflict situation. The Lesotho Prime Minister had requested external military assistance to restore law and order, arguing that government was held in ransom and that the opposition alliance had effected a coup. The critical pillar of the Prime Minister's request was the following passage in his letter:

The most serious tragedy is that the police, and in particular the army, are at best, spectators. The mutiny in the LDF (Lesotho Defence Force) is taking root. The brigadier who has been forced to be commander, has had to go into hiding because the mutineers have attempted forcing him to announce a coup. He has so far refused and fears for his life. In this instance, *we have a coup on our hands* (My emphasis).

This paragraph painted a graphic picture of an impending civil war and a covert military coup. The importance of an allegation of a military coup in this regard lies in the fact that it invoked Article 5, section 2 (ib) of the draft protocol on Politics, Defence and Security in the Southern African Development Community which states that one of the intra-state conflicts that could warrant a regional intervention is "a threat to the legitimate authority of the government (such as a military coup by the armed or para-military forces)" (SADC, 1997). Besides a reference to a coup which invoked the SADC protocol, yet another ground for involvement of South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe, could have been the 1994 Memorandum of Understanding which was signed to reinstate the BCP government after its temporary displacement by King Letsie III. Article one of the Memorandum states that "the guarantors commit themselves to remain directly involved in this understanding, and shall take all necessary

embedded and entrenched security and strategic interests of South Africa (Hough, 1998). This is no idle observation, for in international relations states relate to one another in terms of how best to maximise value of their own interest. First and foremost, South Africa was anxious to protect the multi-billion dollar Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) which it is undertaking jointly with Lesotho government to transfer water to South Africa's industrial heartland mainly Johannesburg and Pretoria. It was presumed that the escalation of the conflict could jeopardise the expected returns from this project. Second, South Africa was worried about the possibility of this conflict degenerating into outright civil war and thereby spilling over into its own borders, thus causing havoc especially in the context of the impending general election of 1999. Third, in the eyes of South African strategists, the Lesotho conflict had a huge potential to unleash a massive exodus of illegal migrants and political refugees, an unwelcome phenomenon in the context of the rising tide of xenophobia in that country. Fourth, the South African authorities reckoned that the conflict could intensify cross-border trafficking of illegal small arms and narcotics. All these were crucial, albeit unstated, factors that principally drove South Africa to intervene militarily in the Lesotho conflict.

The Botswana connection in the Lesotho conflict is relatively difficult to explain. Surely Botswana has no immediate security and strategic interests in Lesotho. A combination of various dynamics in Botswana's domestic political scene and its regional postures since the recent past could shed some light on the rationale for its military intervention in Lesotho. As in the case of South Africa, the official explanation revolves around arguments for restoration of political stability in Lesotho, although there is no evidence of a formal bilateral agreement. In his speech delivered at the SADC-EU Ministerial Conference in Vienna, Austria in early November 1998, the Botswana Foreign Minister, Gen. Mompoti Merafhe, stated that "SADC countries intervened in Lesotho in order to restore constitutional order in that country. It was clearly obvious that without this intervention, Lesotho was in real danger of sliding into chaos, *with the obvious negative consequences on the stability of other countries in the region*" (Emphasis mine). Tsie also concurs that the external military intervention had as its *raison d'être*, restoration of law and order after "weeks of political unrest sparked by the disputed May 1999 election outcome"

(1998:10). These issues may well have mattered in the scheme of things that drove the external actors to intervene militarily. However, there is need to transcend conventional wisdom and subject state-centric explanation of behaviour of external forces towards the Lesotho crisis to some critical analysis. For this author, the Botswana involvement in the Lesotho crisis was propelled by multiple factors, which were of a fairly different order from those that influenced South Africa. First, the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) has a considerable influence over major foreign policy and regional security projections and postures of the government. The fact that Lt-Gen. Ian Khama, former commander of the BDF, is the new deputy president of the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), places him in a strategic position to influence Botswana's regional policy in a way that portrays regional security more in military terms and therefore adoption of militaristic solutions to emerging conflicts. Add to this the strategic position held by Gen. Mompone Merafhe, BDF founder, as Minister of Foreign Affairs; then clearly the military in Botswana is generally strategically placed to have the necessary influence on Botswana's regional policy (Molutsi, 1997; Campbell, 1997). It is easy to infer from the above that when the Lesotho crisis became an issue in official circles in Botswana, as an official guarantor of Lesotho's democracy, the views of the securocrats held sway over those of the bureaucrats, thus leading to a military intervention. Second, militarism is a phenomenon that is on the increase in Southern Africa, including South Africa and Botswana, and, if left unchecked, it has great potential of narrowing the horizons of civil authority over regional and other foreign policy matters. The upward spiral of conflicts in the region and strategies used to contain them suggests that the military and ministries of defence are gaining upper hand over diplomats and ministries of foreign affairs. In a word, gunboat diplomacy seems to be on the ascendancy and in the process superceding preventive diplomacy. The BDF has experienced a phenomenal growth in the recent past and is now estimated to the strength of about 10 000 (Molutsi, 1997). The Botswana government is currently constructing a massive military base, the Molepolole air base, and upon completion, this will be the largest and most expensive air base in the Southern African region. Claiming a handsome 13% of the total public expenditure, defence spending in Botswana has involved, inter alia, acquisition of massive military equipment linked both to the air base and also the cross-border conflict with Namibia over the disputed



Kasikili island, which is still under consideration by the International Court of Justice (Campbell, 1997). This trend of militarisation in the region partly also helps us understand why Botswana took part in a military solution to the Lesotho. The irony here, though, is that both Botswana and South Africa are on record vehemently disapproving of military intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Third, the contestation for regional power in Southern Africa after the demise of apartheid may have been another factor that drove Botswana to intervene militarily in the Lesotho crisis along with South Africa. The on-going tussle between Mandela and Mugabe over the leadership of the region which has already paralysed the SADC organ on Politics, Defence and Security, and may adversely affect the entire SADC formation, seems to have divided member-states into two political camps: (a) one led by South Africa which strives to have the SADC Organ institutionally subsumed under the Summit chaired by Mandela; and (b) the other led by Zimbabwe which strives to have the SADC Organ operate at the summit level in its own right and chaired by Mugabe (Tsie, 1998). Botswana, for instance, seems to have chosen to be in league with South Africa, while Namibia, among others, has chosen to go with Zimbabwe. Various military operations could be undertaken by each one of these factions in the name of SADC, but most invariably the dominant interests will remain those of dominant powers in each faction i.e. South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The military intervention in the Lesotho conflict is fraught with controversies. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the military operation in Lesotho does not, by any stretch of imagination, amount to a peacekeeping operation. Neither can it be characterised as a peace enforcement operation. It is simply a military intervention which does not have any place within the UN Charter, especially Chapters VI, VII and VIII (de Coning, 1998). Pre-requisites for either peace-keeping or peace-enforcement operations within the UN framework are consent, impartiality and minimum use of force (de Coning, 1998). The external military intervention did not get the consent of both parties to the conflict; neither was it impartial for it was meant to bolster a government; nor did it involve minimum use of force judging by the scale of war that ensued and the casualty levels among both soldiers and civilians. Further more, this operation does not seem to have a formal mandate from SADC itself by a way

of a Resolution emanating from a SADC Summit. The military intervention does not also have any formal sanction from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The military operation further raises technical questions of authenticity given that the three countries of Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa do not share a common defence agreement. The 1994 Memorandum of Agreement that reinstated the then BCP government after a temporary displacement by the King which was overseen by Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe did not have a provision for military intervention in Lesotho's political crises. The most plausible way to explain this military intervention is that it was both a strategy meant to protect South Africa's strategic interests and an instrument to neutralise the army and force the parties to reach a negotiated settlement. Immediately, the South African troops wreaked havoc first around the Katse Dam in the Thaba-Tseka District and Maseru, the entire week beginning September 22, the country gravitated to the precipice of a civil war. Armed gangs went about confiscating vehicles, looting shops, burning buildings (business and private homes). Overnight a deep nationalistic campaign, heavily imbued with xenophobia, was on against foreign, especially South Africa, investors. The South African High Commissioner had to be quickly whisked away across the border and SADC troops organised convoys for other expatriates to seek temporary refuge in Ladybrand. Major towns in the lowlands, namely Maseru, Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek and Butha-Buthe were turned into no-go areas by armed youth and the total damage caused is estimated at R160 million with 246 firms burnt down and about 4000 workers laid out of work as a result. Victims of the political unrest and the concomitant violence include "those people killed (90), injured (200), in hiding (1000) and those who lost their jobs (4016)" (GOL, 1998:xi).

Alongside the military pressure, SADC managed to bring the parties to the negotiation table. In this manner, SADC entered the Lesotho conflict dangling the carrot for the parties to see value in reaching agreement and at the same time brandishing the stick to remind them which side their bread is buttered. In other words, the military intervention was to assure the ruling party a future in the post-negotiation phase, while at same time containing the armed offensive of the opposition elements. Political and military strategies were then used to resolve the Lesotho conflict. Although, ultimately a political settlement was

reached, resolution of the security front of the conflict seems relatively difficult to realise.

### **The Political Settlement: Prospects for Stability and Democratic governance**

The external military intervention went hand in hand with a negotiation process that was mediated by the South African Minister of Safety and Security, Sydney Mufamadi. It was through this process that a political settlement was reached by all the parties to the conflict. The two key pillars of settlement are (a) the retention of the LCD as the ruling party, thus not acceding to the opposition demand for a government of national unity; and (b) the establishment of a Interim Political Structure (IPA), thus not allowing the LCD a free reign over preparations for the next election. The IPA comprises representatives of all the parties that contested the 1998 election. Its main objectives are:

- to prepare, in liaison with the legislative and executive organs of the state, for a fresh election in the year 2000;
- to level the playing field for all parties and candidates to participate meaningfully in the election in an environment that promotes and protects human rights;
- to eliminate any impediments to legitimate political activity, including undue victimisation or intimidation;
- to ensure equal treatment of all political parties and candidates by all governmental institutions and in particular by all government-owned media, prior to and during the election (Government of Lesotho, 1998).

The formation of this body represents a positive development for future stability in Lesotho. Its effectiveness and the extent to which it contributes positively to stability will depend decisively on how the security front of the conflict is resolved. The negotiated political settlement has to dovetail and blend with an amicable solution of the security front of the conflict. If the security front of the conflict deteriorates, for one reason or the other, it may cause serious reversals on the gigantic strides already made on the political front. In a nutshell, the future stability, peace and reconciliation in Lesotho is inextricably tied to how

the present conflict is managed in its entirety. If it is botched up, it can only spell a perilous and ominous future. If it is managed well and diligently, it could pretty well spell a bright future for a country which has since independence been engulfed in protracted and unending political turmoil.

Besides the establishment of political stability, peace and reconciliation, the Lesotho state also faces a daunting task of economic reconstruction and development. Lesotho's already feeble and resource-poor economy has been adversely affected by the recent conflicts and instability. It is estimated that the reconstruction and development efforts will cost about M300 million "made up of reconstruction of private sector commercial and household dwellings of about M190 million (...) public sector reconstruction of M75 million and replenishment of public vehicles of the order of M35 million. In addition, there is the loss of gross domestic product of the order of M365 million on account of the estimated 9.7 per cent decline of GDP in 1998" (GOL, 1998:xvi).

## **Conclusion**

It is quite evident that the 1998 political turmoil in Lesotho is not explicable by reference exclusively to one single factor, such as the election. Its roots lay deeper and its parameters were more broader than the election and the electoral system. In order to better understand this turmoil, systemic factors are very crucial, although individual actors had their own [un]fair share of contribution to the crisis. In this paper, we have given pride of place to structural crisis and institutional paralysis as our point of departure to make sense of the root causes of the political turmoil. We have also argued that the conflict revolved more around contestation over state power, political participation and resource distribution. Management of the conflict took two primary forms: (a) military pressure, and (b) negotiation leading to political settlement. The conclusion that we draw is that the political settlement reached thus far may augur well for future stability and democratic governance, but this depends critically on how the settlement is managed. Although the Lesotho state faces bleak futures given both internal and external challenges, it has not yet collapsed *à la* Zartman (1995). By state collapse is meant "a situation where the structure, authority (legitimate power), law and political order have fallen apart and must be

reconstituted in some form, old or new" (Zartman, 1995:1). The prospect of state collapse in Lesotho is a real one if the political settlement thus far reached falls apart. Undoubtedly, consequences of state collapse are too ghastly to contemplate.

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## Notes to contributors

Contribution to the LSSR from academics and others with specialist knowledge in various fields of the Social Sciences are welcome and should be submitted in English.

1. The length of articles should be 8000 words and must be accompanied by an abstract of not more than 300 words.
2. Articles should be typed in double spacing on A4 paper. Two hard copies must be submitted together with a diskette preferably on Wordperfect 5.1, 6.0 or 6.1.
3. Broad divisions in the text must be indicated by clear headings and sub-headings where appropriate.
4. Maps, diagrams and graphs should be camera-ready and submitted separately.
5. References to books and articles should be identified in the text by the surname author, year of publication and page reference, placed in parenthesis e.g. (Ake 1996:61). Only the year of publication and page are indicated in a case where the author is mentioned in the sentence.
6. If the same author is referred to more than once on books or articles published in the same year, the references are distinguished sequentially e.g. (Ake 1996a; 1966b etc.).
7. Quotations of more than 40 words should be indented and single spaced. Shorter quotations must be indicated by double quotation marks.
8. Endnotes should be used as additional explanatory material to a point referred to in the text. Footnotes are not allowed.
9. Bibliographic references should be placed at the end of the article in alphabetical order. For books indicate author's surname and initials, full title of the book (bold), publisher, place of publication, date of publication e.g. Ake, C. **Democracy and Development in Africa**, (The Brookings Institution: Washington, 1996). For journal articles Provide author's surname and initials, full title of article, journal, (bold) volume, number and date e.g. Leys, C., "The Crisis in 'Development Theory'", **New Political Economy**, Vol. 1 No. 1 March, 1996.



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